A WARNING TO BACK-SLIDERS; OR, A DISCOVERY FOR THE RECOVERY OF FALLEN ONES.

Delivered in a SERMON at *Pauls*, before the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the CITY of *LONDON.*

By *RALPH VENNING.*

Hosea 2. 7. *Then shall she say, I will go and returne to my first husband, for then was it better with me then now.*

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To the Right Honourable

THO. VINER,

LORD MAJOR:

AND THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,

THE

ALDERMEN

of the City of *LONDON.*

Honourable and honoured,

I Hope it will not be imputed to me as a crime, that I did all I could to keep this Sermon *from the Presse, not fearing that it would do any hurt*; but rather *that it might do little, if any good, in this hard,* very hard-hearted age. *But seeing it hath*

pleased (*I think I may* without offe[illegible] *say*) *God and you, to call it to r*[illegible] *brance, some moneths after it wa*[illegible] *I could not but obey your Order*, [illegible] *ing you that which you called for, vi*[illegible] the Sermon, *and not another thing. For indeed, having observed some books frontispic'd* with a Sermon Preacht at PAULS, *which* (*as 'tis said of Si*[illegible] *Francis* Drake's *Ship*) *had noth*[illegible] *left* (not a plank nor rib) *but the very name thereof*; *I durst not* (and I hope none will think it a too nice and a needlesse scruple of conscience, that I say) *I durst not give you that to read which you did not heare. You have the same things and words, with no more variation then*; nor inded so much as, *the necessary*, very necessary *difference, that is to be put between pen and tongue, required.*

If it be estimated by the seasonablenesse of it, it will (as it seems you judge) *be beautifull*; *and I hope that it will not be the lesse acceptable, nor the* more *successless, for being plaine: for I professe*

(to

(to prevent all exceptions to be made againſt it on that account) *that it hath more of heart, then Art, and of affection, then affectation. The time would not give me leave to* uſher *it in with any Preface, nor to* cloſe *it with any Oratorious inſinuations; nor is it* (I think) *fit to do it now, on the grounds forementioned.*

Homely, *yet I hope* wholſome, *as it is, let it go; and the bleſſing of God go along with it.* The leſſe man *appears in it, the more God may appeare by it. If it may bring ſome glory to* his Name, *by engaging any* to remember *either from whence they ſhould not fall, and ſo to ſtand faſt; or any* to remember *from whence they have fallen, and ſo to returne, I ſhall be glad, though my* Name *ſuffer by it, as I believe in ſome mens eſteemes it will. But not to trouble you any longer with ſuch things, nor to enlarge* this Porch *beyond the proportion allowable; I ſhall inſtead of ſpeaking to you ſpeak to God for you.*

I do heartily beſeech Almighty God, that that City (*over which God hath made you overſeers*) may never become an harlot, *that it may never be ſaid of it*, It hath loſt its firſt love, *and left its firſt works*. It was full of judgement, righteouſneſſe *did* lodge in it, but now murderers. That its *Silver* may never become *droſſe*, nor its *wine* be mixt with *water*; that its *Princes* may never be rebellious, nor companions of thieves; that none of them may love gifts, nor follow after rewards; that, *Oh that, it may never be ſaid*, they judge not the fatherleſſe, nor doth the cauſe of the widow come before them; *Leſt the Lord of Hoſts, the Mighty One of* Iſrael *ſhould ſay*, Ah, I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies. *The good Lord rather turne his hand*, and purely purge away the droſſe, and take away the tin, and make Judges as at the *firſt*, and Counſellours as at the *beginning*; *that ſhe may be called*, the City of righteouſneſſe, the faithfull City;

and

and for these things, the beauty and the glory of the whole Earth. *Thus*, honourable and honoured, *is the hearty prayer of*

March 1654. Your *humble Servant*,

RALPH VENNING.

A WARNING TO *BACKSLIDERS*, OR A Diſcovery for the Recovery of *Fallen ones*.

Let him that hath an eare to heare, heare what the Spirit ſaith to the Angel of the Church of Epheſus.

REVEL. 2. 5.

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the firſt workes; or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candleſtick out of his place, except thou repent.

IN this Epiſtle you have theſe three parts;

1. The *Superſcription*, by way of Preface, and Introduction, in the firſt verſe.

2. You have the *Contents* of the Epistle, in the five following *verses*; wherein you have,

1. A commendation, in the 2, 3, and 6th. *verses*.
2. An exception, which implies a reproof, *v.* 4.
3. An exhortation in the Text, *v.* 5.

3. The third branch of the Epistle, *viz.* the *Epilogue* or conclusion of it, *v.* 7 He that hath an eare, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches. *That which is written to one, is spoken to all.*

My Text falls among the *Contents* of the Epistle, and is the third part thereof, *viz.* the exhortation backt with a threatning.

In the exhortation you have three things required.

1. A sight and sense of their sin; *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen.*
2. A repentance for their sin; *Remember, and repent.*

3.

3. A returning from their sin; *Do the first works.*

The threatning hath these three things in it.

1. The certainty of Christs coming; *I will come.*
2. The suddennesse of his coming; *I will come quickly.*
3. The end of his coming; *I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, unlesse thou repent.*

I shall very briefly touch a few general Observations, which the context and the Text do afford us, and then come closer to the words.

The first Observation is this, That God takes special notice, and keeps an exact account of all our doings, be they good, or be they bad; (*I know thy works, viz. what they were, and what they are.*) God hath his books of Remembrance written, according to which he will judge the world; for he will bring every work to judgement, with every secret thing, whether

it be good or evil: *I know thy works, &c.*

2. *Obſ.* That perſons may be prais'd to their diſpraiſe: they may be commended to their diſcommendation; *I know thy works, but*, or *Nevertheleſſe.* A mans praiſe *is ever the leſſe, when he is prais'd with a Nevertheleſſe.* To commend with a but, is but to diſcommend. To ſay, ſuch a man *was* a meek man, *was* an humble man, *was* an holy man, is not a praiſe, but a diſpraiſe; you did run well, who hindred you? Such an one was good, but *quantum mutatus ab illo!* the man is not what he was. Praiſes with exceptions are (little better then) diſparagements. *Nevertheleſſe, &c.*

3. *Obſ.* The good we have done will not excuſe the bad we do do: God will not put the good in one balance, and the bad in another, and make allowances of the bad for the goods ſake; *No*, it is no excuſe at all to *Epheſus*, that ſhe had labour'd, and that ſhe had wrought, when it can be ſaid,

I have against thee, and thou hast left thy first workes. Former fruitfulnes will be no excuse for present barrennesse; former industry will not plead for any mans present idlenesse; a good beginning will never make amends for a bad end. If the latter end be worse then the beginning, it had been better for them, they had never knowne the way of righteousnesse, then when they have known it, to depart from the holy Commandment. *I have against thee &c.*

4. *Obs.* That when love decayes, our works decay; he layes all upon this: *Thou hast left thy first love.* As is our love of God, such will be our obedience unto God. If our love be quick and lively, our life will be full of good works; but if once love decline, works will decay; for faith *it self* worketh by love; *Thou hast left thy first love.*

5 *Obs.* That God doth not strike without warning. God doth not sur-

prise his creatures, nor fall upon them at an unawares, but he gives them notice of his coming, before he comes; & he admonisheth before he threatens. *Remember*, (saith he) *or else I will come.* God doth not take advantage against poor sinners, nor deal with them according to their iniquities; for then, who could stand? but God, though he might use his Sword, will yet use his Word, and therefore gives them notice before-hand; and this is the very reason given by *Peter*, why God makes not haste to destroy the world, because (*saith he*) God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; *Repent, or else I will come, &c.*

6. *Obs.* If Gods admonitions do not take with us, Gods threatnings will certainly take hold of us; if we do not hear his Word, we shall undoubtedly feel his Sword; if you do not repent, *I will* (without doubt, certainly I will) *come*, and remove thy candlestick, &c,

I ſhall mention no more as to the general; only give you four other Obſervations from the Text, and then ſingle out one of them to ſpeak unto.

The firſt is this,

1. That to remember from whence we are falleu, is a very great help to our recovery; to remember from whence we are fallen, doth very much conduce to our recovery; tis like going into one's native aire, when in a conſumption: *Remember, &c.*

2. God doth not only require that we ſhonld remember from whence we are fallen, but he alſo requires that we ſhould repent for falling; *Remember, and repent.*

3. God doth not only require that we ſhould repent for ſin, but he alſo requires that we ſhould repent from ſinne, and do the firſt works. Repentance is to be *not only for dead works, but from dead works.* To repent without reformation is a contradiction, and whoſoever (*as one*

quotes from Tertullian) repents with a contradiction, ſhall be pardon'd with a contradiction; to repent and continue in ſin, is repentance with a contradiction; to be pardon'd and go to hell, is a pardon with a contradiction; ſuch repentance, ſuch pardon; *Do then the firſt works.*

4. If backſliders do not remember, and repent, and reforme, their doom will be ſad at the coming of Chriſt. He will come, but to their coſt and torment, for he will take away their candleſtick, and caſt them into outer darkneſſe; *Elſe I will come, &c.*

The firſt of theſe four is the Propoſition which I ſhall ſpeak unto, *viz.* That for a people to remember from whence they are fallen, doth very much conduce to their recovery and reſtauration. In the handling whereof, I ſhall ſhew,

1. What it is to remember.
2. That to remember doth conduce to recovery.
3. How

3. How remembring from whence we are fallen, doth conduce to recovery.

To the firſt, *viz.* what it is to remember. The word hath three ſignifications; each and every of which do's very well ſuite with what is intended in the Text.

1. *To remember*, is to call to minde that which we had forgotten, which we had let ſlip out of our memory. And ſo it's uſed in *Mat.* 26.25. *When the Cock crew, Peter remembred the words of Jeſus*, (and that very remembrance ingaged him to repent; *For he went out and wept bitterly.*) *He remembred the words of Jeſus*, that is, he called to mind what *Jeſus* had told him, and he had forgotten, *viz. That before the Cock crew he ſhould deny him thrice.* So then to call to mind that which we once were, and to look back upon that which we once did, and from which we are now fallen, is uſeful for our recovery & reſtauration to that ſtate.

2. *To*

2. *To remember* signifies to meditate upon; Now meditation is a thinking of a thing over and over, again and again; 'tis the fixing and settling of the thoughts upon such or such a subject. So 'tis us'd in *Ps.*63.6. *I remember thee upon my bed,* (and presently addes, as an explanation of his meaning) *and meditate of thee in the night-wathes.* So that to remember is not barely to cal a thing to minde, but to keep it in minde, to revolve it over & over. So, *Joh.* 15.20. Christ charges them to remember those words, *viz. That the Disciple is not above his Master.* To remember, that is, to think often of, and muse much upon those words. Now thus a settled meditation upon, and keeping in mind the thoughts of what we once were, & what we once did, and what we once had, and from all which we are now fallen, doth very much conduce to the re-instating of us into that condition.

3. There is yet an higher degree of meaning in the word, and that is, as

it

it signifies *to lay to heart*; not only to call to minde, and keep in minde, but to lay to heart: *Remember from whence thou art fallen*, that is, lay it to heart, be seriously and tenderly affected with it; for that's the laying of a thing to heart. According to this sense you have the word us'd, *Isaiah* 57.11. *Thou hast not remembered, nor laid it to thine heart.* And in the *Lamentations*, chapt. 3. *v.* 19, 20. 'tis very pathetically and feelingly expresst; *Remembring mine affliction and my misery, the worm-wood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.* This is that which our remembrance is to reach unto, *viz.* to an humbling, to an heart-affecting, yea, to an heart-afflicting, for our being fallen; and thus to remember doth exceedingly conduce to our recovery; and that it doth so, is *the second thing* which I am to prove.

And this I prove by two irreprovable witnesses.

1. Gods

1. Gods owne Teſtimony.

2. The experience of fallen ones or backſliders themſelves.

1. God himſelfe, who is truth, ſpeaks the truth and cannot lie, tells us ſo much in *Jerem.* 8. 5, 6. *Why then is this people of Jeruſalem ſlidden back with a perpetual backſliding? they hold faſt deceit, they refuſe to return. I hearkened and heard, but they ſpake not aright, no man repented him of his wickedneſſe, ſaying, What have I done?*

As much as if he had ſaid, How comes it to paſſe? what's the reaſon? why is it, that no man repented of his wickedneſſe? 'Tis, ſaith he, becauſe no man asked himſelf, *What he had done?* no man remembred from whence he was fallen; no man did ſo much as conſider his wayes, nor caſt an eye back upon his former converſation, *No man ſaid, What have I done.* This remembring is a reflex act, 'tis a kinde of *catechizing* the ſoul, putting queries to a mans heart: Now ſaith he, there

is

is no man doth this, they call not to mind, nor lay to heart their backſlidings. *They that minde not what they have done, are not like to minde what they ſhould do.* The ſum of it amounts to this, that if men did but remember from whence they were fallen, 'twere ſcarce poſſible, but they ſhould repent, return and do their firſt works.

2. *Beſides Gods Teſtimony*, you ſhall have another to ſecond it, (that out of the mouth of two witneſſes this word may be eſtabliſht) & that is, the experience of backſliders or fallen ones. That in *Hoſ.* 2. 7. is a pregnant inſtance: *Then ſhall ſhe ſay, I will go and returne to my firſt husband*; Why ſo? *ask you, why?* there is good reaſon for it; *For then it was better with me then now.*

Here you ſee, that calling to minde from whence ſhe was fallen, ingaged her to return, *I will return, for it was better, &c.* Go where we will, we ſhall never ſpeed ſo well as in walking

with

with God; and if we decline his way, and go out of his pathes, we ſhall never be at eaſe till we returne again.

It will never be ſo well as it was at firſt, till we come to our firſt Huſband; *It was better then, then now.*

Another experience as evidential as the former, you have from the Prodigal, *Luk.* 15. who, ſaith the text, *When he came to himſelf*, (Marke that, *when he came to himſelf*, the man was not himſelf before; ſin beſots men, it darkens and dulls their underſtandings, that a man is not a man, but is beſide himſelf) *But when he came to himſelf, he quickly went from himſelf unto his father*; when he called to minde what he once had in his fathers houſe, when he remembred his former ſtate, and compar'd his paſt with his preſent condition, now, ſaith he, *I will ariſe and go to my father*; when he remembered from whence he was fallen, he repented, &c.

A third, and no leſſe famous an experience

tience, you have of this in *Psal.* 119. 59. *I bethought me*, saith he, *of my ways, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies:* He speaks the language of a man that had been wandering, that had gone out of his way, and turned aside to by-paths; but at last is at a stand, & makes an halt, and then bethought himself: I began, saith he, to call to minde whence I came, whither I was going, and where I was: and finding that I was not right, but was fallen; I fac'd about, *and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.*

Thus you see the truth clearly evinced, That remembring from whence we are fallen, doth very much conduce to our recovery.

The third thing which I have to do, is to shew you how remembring from whence we are fallen, doth help us to returne, what kinde of influence it hath upon our hearts; or what are the things which it makes use of to engage us to returne.

It works upon us these three wayes.

It works { 1. *By way of shame.*
2. *By way of fear.*
3. *By way of ingenuity.*

1. The remembring from whence we are fallen, works upon us by making use of that *shame* and shamefac'dnesse which is in man. Man *(if not hardened by sin)* is a modest creature, and will blush at a fault when he sees it; Now when he comes to remember what he once was, and now is not; and what he once did, and now doth not; what he once enjoyed, and is now deprived thereof; the man is ashamed, and bethinks himself to returne for very shame.

You know when a man hath had the name and fame of a valiant man, and shall now be reputed, and reported a coward, he will need no other spur then shame for the quickening of him, to approve himself a man that may recover his first honour..

Shame hath a very great influence on

on men, and truly, *(as the Proverb ſaith)* Paſt ſhame, and paſt goodneſſe.

But if a man retain his modeſty, and do not get a brazen fore-head, a whores face, or a brow of braſſe, there's more then hopes of his recovery, whenever he remembers from whence he is fallen.

This needs no clearing, 'tis ſo clear; yet take a proof of it from *Ezek.* 16. towards the latter end, *v.* 61. *Then thou ſhalt remember thy wayes*; pray mark it, *Then thou ſhalt remember thy wayes*; and what then? *Thou ſhalt be aſhamed.*

So alſo, *v.* 63. *That thou mayeſt remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee:* Mark it, ſhame even after I am pacified; ſhame after reconciliation; after God remembers his Covenant, it will become us to remember our wayes, which have not been good, and *that with ſhame*. In *ver.* 60. ſaith he, *I will remember my Covenant*, and, *v.* 61.

Then ſhalt thou remember thy ways.

Now the ſhame ariſeth upon this account, that a man ſhould fall from that duty, that love and ſervice from which he hath no reaſon, nor ſhadow, nor pretence of reaſon to fall. *'Tis the moſt unreaſonable thing in the world to ſin againſt God;* and if man be ask'd why he ſins? he muſt for ever ſpeechleſſe, that is, ſilent, not having any reaſon to give, any thing to ſay, why he ſhould depart from God.

Thus God diſputes it with backſliding *Iſrael*, Jer. 2. Thus ſaith the Lord, *What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity?* As if God had ſaid, What evil have I done? as Chriſt ſaid, For which of my good works do you ſtone me? what have you to lay to my charge?

what

what occaſion have I given you that you ſhould not love me now as at the firſt? what reaſon can you produce for your Apoſtaſie, and for your falling from your firſt love? am not I as lovely as ever, and as loving as ever? for ſo God reaſons with them in the latter end of that Chapter: *O generation*, O vile, fooliſh, reaſonleſſe generation, *ſee the Word of the Lord*, gain-ſay it if you can; *have I been a wildernſſe unto Iſrael, or a land of darkneſſe?* If ſo, you have ſome occaſion to revolt and turn away backward; but if not, *wherefore then ſay my people*, what reaſon have my people to ſay, *We will come no more to thee?* Oh! what a ſhameful thing (ſaith God) is this, that a people ſhould go from a God that never did them hurt, but good all their dayes? A God, who when they wanted bread, fed them; when they wanted water, ſmote the rock, and gave them

drink, *He was no wilderneſſe to them in the wilderneſſe*; While they were in a barren land, God was fruitfulneſſe to them, he rained Manna from Heaven, and fed them with Angels food, and gave them Honey out of the rock, &c.

Now after this expoſtulation, when a man reflecting upon himſelf, ſhall look back upon, and read over his wayes, and then finde I had no reaſon to break the holy, juſt and good commandments of my God; I can give God no account why I ſhould returne to folly, why I ſhould walk after vanity, *lying vanities*, why I ſhould forſake my firſt love; What follows hereupon, but ſhame and bluſhing? ſo that for very ſhame, the man repents and returnes *to do his firſt works.*

2. Remembring from whence we are fallen, works upon us *by way*

way of fear. There is in man a fear when he hath committed evil; fear falls upon him, and the man is afraid, leſt the iniquitie of his heels ſhould overtake him. You know, that no ſooner had *Adam* ſinned, but the man was afraid, and hid himſelf for fear. No ſooner had *Cain* ſinned, but *Cain* was afraid, and preſently his countenance fell. *When men fall, their countenance and their courage falls.* When once men remember from whence they are fallen, they feare leſt threatnings ſhould take hold of them, and are afraid leſt God ſhould reward them according to their iniquities.

God ſhakes his rod over backſliders, and threatens them, that if they do not come to him, *he will come, &c.* If they come not to him for their ſafety, he will come to them for their ruine. Now *very feare*, leſt the wrath and damnation which God hath denounced againſt ſinners, ſhould fall

upon them, and be their portion; very feare(I ſay) ingages them to returne.

And my beloved, God doth allow in us this principle of fear; none of the faculties or affections of man are extinguiſhed, but all made uſe of in working man God-ward; God doth not only make uſe of a mans modeſty, & love, and ingenuity, but he makes uſe alſo of that fearfulneſſe that is in man: and therefore you ſhall finde, that Chriſt himſelf(*ſurely not for nought*)gives this rule to his own Diſciples: *Fear not him that can kill only the body, but fear him that can take ſoul and body and throw them into hell, I ſay unto you, Fear him.* And as the Apoſtle ſaith, ſo may I, *Knowing the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men*; Knowing what *a dreadfull thing 'tis to fall into the hands of the living God*, we perſwade men to remember from whence they are fallen, and to repent.

3. *But then thirdly*, remembring from

from whence we are fallen, works upon our *ingenuity* too. Man is a very docible and teachable creature, and is exceedingly wrought upon by courteſies and kindneſſes; Now when a ſoul ſees, that God doth not only threaten him, in caſe he do nor come in, that he ſhall be damned; but alſo promiſes him in caſe he do come in, that he ſhall be welcome, that he ſhall be ſaved; this ſo works upon mans ingenuity, that he cannot finde it in his heart to ſtand it out againſt ſuch a God

A God of love and kindneſſe, who promiſes all the entertainment that love can make for poor ſouls; and, *Oh Lord*, how ſweet will that be!

God deals not with man after the manner of men, *Jer.* 3. 1. *They ſay*, (ſaith God) *If a man put away his wife, and ſhe go from him, and become another mans, ſhall ſhe return again?* No, ſay they, *by no means*; *But I ſay, Thou, and though thou haſt plaid the harlot with many lovers, yet come*, and welcome *to*

me, ſaith the Lord.

Now what ſoul can finde in its heart, when God ſaith, Come, and I will pardon all thy backſlidings, I will forgive all thine iniquities, I will entertain thee, and remember thy ſin no more, thou ſhalt never heare of it again, I will never upbraid thee with falling from thy firſt love, if thou wilt return and make thine abode with me: *What ſoul, I ſay,* can look God in the face, and turne his back upon that face, that lovely and ſmiling, love-looking face? *Who can do it?*

I remember a very notable inſtance of this ingenuity in *Saul* towards *David*; it's a place worth your turning to it, to reade and obſerve it, 1 *Sam.* 24. You know that *David* had an advantage againſt *Saul*, and could have cut off his head, but *David* cuts off only the lap of his garment, to let *Saul* know that he could (for it was in his power to) have done more; Now ſaid *David*, *Behold, this day thine*

eyes

eyes (ſufficient witneſſes) *have ſeen how the Lord had delivered thee into mine hands, and ſome bade me kil thee* (would I have obſerved the opportunity of providence, or attended to counſel, I had ſlain thee,) *but mine eye ſpared thee,* (whoſe eye ſpared not me,) *and I ſaid, I will not put forth mine hand againſt my Lord,* (though my Lord hath put forth his hand againſt me.) *Moreover, my Father,* (if thou doubt it) *ſee, yea, ſee the skirt of thy Robe in my hand, for in that I cut off the skirt of thy Robe, and killed thee not; know thou and ſee,* (for 'tis undeniably true) *that there is no tranſgreſſion in my hand, that I have not ſinned,* (as 'tis charged upon me, as if I ſought not only the Crown, but the Kings life, that I might have his head, and then the Crown,) and if not, *Why,* Oh why *hunteſt thou my ſoul* i.e. my life, *to take it?* Here is DAVIDS plea. Let us now ſee the iſſue and ſucceſſe thereof, *verſ.* 16. *It came to paſſe, when* David *had made an end of*

ſpeaking

ſpeaking theſe wordes, that Saul (melting and weeping) *ſaid, Is this thy voice, my ſon* (Oh my ſon) *David, and Saul lift up his voice and wept, and he ſaid* (yea, and had cauſe to ſay) *to David, Thou art more righteous then I:* (and he proves it clearly thus,) *For thou haſt rewarded me good, whereas I rewarded thee evil, and thou haſt* (demonſtratively) *ſhewed this day, that thou haſt dealt well with me; for as much as when the Lord had delivered me into thine hand, thou didſt not kill me;* (which he wondred at upon this account) *if a man finde his enemy, will he let him go well away?* Oh no, and at laſt, ſaith the Text, *Saul went home; Saul* ſcorned to be ſo baſe to hunt after *Davids* life any more; No, but *Saul went home.* Why now here is the caſe, the very caſe, (*my beloved*) we are all every one of us a backſlidden man, that's fallen into the hands of God; He might have cut off our heads, but (*Oh mercy!*) he only cuts off the skirt of our garments,

ments, and when he hath done, he ſhewes it us, and then askes us, Oh ye ſinners, *ye ſinners*, how can yeo hunt after my Glory? how can ye hunt after my Name? how can ye break my holy Commandments? with what face dare ye do theſe things?

Now I ſay, *very ingenuity* makes the ſoul to cry out as *Saul* did, Is this thy voice, O my God? *is this thy voice*? have I (*alas, I have*) done wicedly, I will do ſo no more; I will go home, LORD, *I will go home*. I will hunt after thy Name, and thy Glory no more; for thou (*Oh love!*) though thou didſt finde me thine enemy, yet didſt thou let me go well away. Oh, *ſaith Ingenuity*, ſhall I now be an enemy to the God, that hath been a friend to me? God forbid. Ah no, I *will go home*.

Take but one inſtance of this overcoming conſideration, wherein you ſhall ſee backſliders returning upon this

this very account, in *Jer.*3. 22. *Returne, ye backsliding children,* saith the Lord, *and I will heal your backslidings*; What followes hereupon? *Behold, we come unto thee, Oh Lord, our God.* What Ingenuity (if any left) can stand it out against such sweet invitations? such not only alluring, but securing promises? surely none. *Behold, we come!*

Thus much, *or thus little* may suffice concerning the Doctrinal part, to have shewen you, That remembring or calling to minde from whence we are fallen, doth very much conduce to our recovery, and how it doth it by working upon our Modesty, Fear and Ingenuity. *What remains now?*

But to beseech every one *to remember whence ye are fallen*, for we are all fallen short of the glory of God. And here we might take an occasion to look as farre back as *Paradise*, and to view that innocent state wherein man *once* stood, and there also to take an account

how

how well it was with man then, when he ſtood before God, having no clothing but his innocency; and therefore needed not to be aſhamed though naked; *no ſin, no ſhame.*

Certainly, *my beloved,* it is not with us, *alas, it is not with us,* our bluſhing tells us that it is not with us, as when we came out of the hands of God; Our feare alſo tells us, that it is not with us, as when God made us; if God ſhould come to us, as he did to *Adam*, and ſay, *Adam, where art thou?* where art thou, O man? I am afraid, that he would finde (*as well as make*) us afraid; he would finde us running behinde the trees of the garden to ſhelter our ſelves, and ſay, *I heard thy voice, and was afraid.*

Now I ſay, let us call to mind from whence we are fallen, for we are all Renegadoes, we are all degenerated, we are all ſlidden back, & fallen down into a lumpiſh, earthly condition; *Oh let us look back again to Paradiſe*, and let

our

our eyes affect our hearts, that we may be re-inſtated, yea, into a better Paradiſe even into the ſecond *Adam, the Lord Chriſt from heaven, heaven'ly*; There's no way to Paradiſe but by Chriſt, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*; Be with me, marke that; when a man is with Chriſt, (*that I may allude*) he is then in Paradiſe, then truly in happineſſe. *That day wherein Chriſt comes to a mans houſe, ſalvation comes to a man; and that day that a man comes to Chriſt, he comes to ſalvation.*

Oh, let us long to be diſſolved in this ſenſe, to die to our ſins, *that we may be with Chriſt*; that we again enjoy that old acquaintance which man had with God before he ſinned, before ſhame, and before fear ſeized upon our hearts.

But ſeeing this is not the *direct* meaning, import, or ſcope of this place, I ſhall paſſe it by, having given it this touch by the way.

This word *properly* relates to us, as

as we have pretended to look heaven-ward again, by having an eye to *Chriſt*, making a profeſſion of the Name and fear of God: and that which it calls upon us for, is *to conſider whether it be with us as at firſt*, whether it be with us as in the dayes of our youth, when we came in to God in the beginning of our dayes. Let us look back a little, and *remember from whence we are fallen*; for I am afraid, it will be made appear that we are fallen, not only ſhort of God, (*for that we are at beſt*) but ſhort of our ſelves; we are not as we were, we do not do as we did, it is not with us as in moneths paſt.

Now that you may know whether and wherein you are fallen, *and ſo remember it as to repent, and do the firſt works*; I ſhal ſhew you what Chriſtians are at their firſt coming in, and converſion to God; *I ſhall draw the picture of their life, though not to the life*, and ſet before you ſome of their frames and works,

works at first. There are ten things which I shall commend to your consideration, *with my prayer to God, that they may conduce to recovery.*

The first thing is this,

First, *That at the first* Professours looked more after goodnesse, then after greatnesse; they minded more the beautifying of their soules, then the adorning of their bodies; they minded more eternity and the things thereof, then they did time and the things thereof; they cared more to be the Lords people, then to be Lords amongst the people. When others cry, *Who will shew us any good*, (corne, and wine, and oile,) their cry is, *Lord lift up upon us the light of thy countenance*; Let us enjoy our God, take the world who will. This, *I believe*, some of you know was once your heart; *well then*, if now thou minde greatnesse more then goodnes, & the adorning of thy body more then the beautifying of thy

thy ſoul, and the things of this world more then the things of eternity and eternal life, thou art fallen. *O remember from whence thou art fallen.* Souls had wont to be ſo taken up with the longing after communion with God, that they were ſcarce at leiſure to beſtow their looks upon the worlds vanity; *If* thou now be at leiſure to beſtow thine heart, thou art fallen; *O remember then from whence thou art fallen.*

It is a very glorious frame that is mentioned concerning our forefathers, in the 11th. of the *Hebrewes*, *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*; in the 13th. *verſ. Theſe all died in faith, not having received the promiſes; but having ſeen them a far off, were perſwaded of them, and embraced them*, (to embrace a promiſe at a thouſand years diſtance, two thouſand years diſtance that is noble faith;) *and confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth; for they that ſay ſuch things, de-*

clare plainly that they ſeek a Countrey. (Mark) their whole buſines was to go home to God; all their travel in this world, was to travel heaven-ward; they make no more uſe of this earth, but to ſet their feet on it, and walk on heaven-ward, they declared *plainly*; no Demonſtration is more evident, then that *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* ſought a Countrey; that they were uot taken up with the things of this world, they ſought a countrey.

Now (*my beloved*) if we are come to this, that we declare plainly, that we ſit down and build our houſes, & our Palaces, and out Cities, as if this were to be our reſt *are we not fallen?* Surely if *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* were alive, they would bluſh to ſee Profeſſours in our dayes, that Pilgrims ſhould take up their abode on earth; Well then, *Remember from whence thou art fallen*, and go to thy old wont again; look after goodneſſe more then greatneſſe, and communion with God

God more then enioyment of the world. *But then in the ſecond place,*

II. *At the firſt,* when Believers come in to Jeſus Chriſt, they are very induſtrious in all holy duties, publickly and privately; they will take paines for God, and for their ſoules, and will not offer unto God that that coſt them nought; *They will riſe early, and go to bed late, I, and eat the bread of carefulneſs; The doing of their fathers will,* for that is their meat and their drink; and cetrainly *if it be not thus now,* thou art fallen; if thou put off God with any thing, nay, (*may I not fear* put off God) with nothing, art thou not fallen?

Thou hadſt wont to have been much in prayer, and much at hearing; if now thou art but little at prayer, & little at hearing; art thou not fallen? They had wont to long for Sabbaths, and, O when will they come? and now they thinke Sabbaths long, and when will they be gone, *& art thou not fallen?* O.

member from whence thou art falen; do thy first works, pray as in the dayes of old, and hear as in the dayes of old, *with an appetite.*

Many a time *some of your souls know* that you could leave the world to follow prayer and hearing; and now do not your souls tell you to your face, you can leave prayer and hearing for the world: *and is not this a fall?* I, and the fall is great. *O remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works,* to thy old industry again.

My beloved, it is a great mistake to think that duties are drudgeries; if people abound in duty, they are afraid left they should come under a Covenant of Works: why *(my beloved)* I tell you, that under the Gospel you must work for your living, *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling;* I say it again, under the Gospel you must work for your living; He that will not labour *(in this sense)* he shall never eat; I am afraid that *many under*

pre-

pretence of fearing a Covenant of Works, have thrown away the Works of the Covenant. O remember from whence ye are fallen, and to your firſt works againe; up and be doing, be as induſtrious (as ever) at hearing, and praying, for it is for your ſouls. *But then,*

III. Beleevers and profeſſors *at firſt*, when they began to be Saints, though they prayed, much and heard much, they thought it all but little *yea, all nothing*, unleſſe they enjoyed God in all theſe; *if they* at any time *came to the wells, and found no waters, they have gone away ſhamed*; if they had come to her, come to prayers, and have not enjoyed God, have not foũd their hearts wrought upon, to be made the more humble & the more holy by it; they have gone ſighing away, & with groans they have departed from the very Throne of Grace; *well then*, but if now thou canſt be contented with bare hearing, though

thou be never the better for it, and with bare praying, though never the better for it; I tell thee thou art falen, *O remember from whence thou art fallen, and to thy first works again.*

Never think that the work is done till thou be drawen neerer to God by it, (as the Apostle saith) so order it, *that all your meetings may be for the better, and not for the worse.*

Now when are our meetings for the better, but when we are the better for our meetings? *What is it to draw near to God in prayer, if we be not drawn nearer to God by prayer?* What is it to go and aske for humility, and abide proud? to go and aske for heavenly-mindednesse, and abide earthly? *What is this?* will bare praying argue the souls communion with God? No, but when a soule is cast into the mould of his prayer, and hath enioyed the frame he hath prayed for, then he may say he hath had communion with God: and therefore (I say) return

to

to your firſt works; never think hearing and praying enough, unleſſe you have your God in, and the work of God upon your hearts. *But then,*

IV. Chriſtians primitive, (let me call them primitive Chriſtians) *at their firſt coming in to God,* all their expreſions to God and man are genuine natural, without Art, ceremony or complement; they deal down-right, plainly and honeſtly with God and man; their prayers to God, they are not a heap of words, but a ſtreame of affection; they are not a multitude of expreſſions, but breathings and longings of ſoul after God; their heart firſt ſpeaks their words, and then their words ſpeak their hearts to God, they feel what they do; *I, but now,* if thy expreſſions to God be matter of Art, and matter of complement; if thou put God off with a parcel of good language, thou art fallen.

Time was when thy heart ſpake firſt, if now thy tongue run before

thy heart, thou art fallen. *O remember to do thy first works again.*

And as to men their expressions were as honest, and as cordial, and as sincere as to God; they spake what they meant, and they meant what they spake; they did not speak every one to his neighbor, with a heart and a heart. I am afraid we have too sad a cause to make complaint with the Prophet in the 12th. *Psal. Help, Lord, the godly man ceaseth, the faithfull failes from among the children of men; they speak vanitie every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double tongue do they speak:* a heart & a heart, that is, they so speak, that a man doth not know them when they speak: A man can lay no more stresse upon their words, then upon the wind; they give one as good words as any in the world, and one hugges himselfe to think, *O this will come to something*, and all these words come to nothing. This was not at first, men made conscience

ſcience firſt of ſpeaking, and then of performing; men were ſhie of promiſing, but if they promiſed, they were ſo honeſt as to keep their words, though they loſt by it, though it were to their hurt, though it were to their prejudice; if it be not ſo now, thou art fallen; *O remember then* (I may ſay) *thy firſt words* in this ſenſe, and let thy words and thy expreſſions be genuine and natural, the very breathings of thy heart; do not complement with God or man. But then in the fifth place, (*for I will diſpatch all I can.*)

V. Believers, or Chriſtians, or Saints (*call them what you will*) at their firſt coming in, they have a very high and honourable eſteem of them that bring them in; their hearts are knit to them, who knit their hearts to God; they are almoſt married to them, that married them to Chriſt; they love them ſo dearly, ſo cordially.

I wil ſhew you but one inſtance to

ſpeak

ſpeak for all the reſt. In *Galatians.* 4. It pleaſed God to make uſe of *Paul* to convert the *Galatians*, to bring them home to Jeſus Chriſt; now ſaith he in the fifteenth Verſe, *When my temptation was in my fleſh, you deſpiſed not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, yea, as Chriſt Jeſus:* If Chriſt himſelf had come in perſon, you could not have given him more honourable entertainment, and a more cordial welcome then you gave me. But now (ſaith he) *Where is then the bleſſedneſſe you ſpake of before? for I bear you record, that if it had been poſſible you would have plucked out your own eyes to have given them to me* Surely they were dear indeed, that were dearer then ones *own eyes*; and yet (marke but the next Verſe,) *Am I become your enomy, becauſe I tell you the truth?* They that once, *at firſt* would have pulled out their eyes for *Paul*, would at laſt have pulled out *Pauls* eyes, and *were they not fallen think you?*

Time

Time was, when beautiful were the feet of them that brought the glad tidings of peace; not only beautiful were the glad tidings of peace which they brought, but they that brought them were beautifull; that is, they were welcome; why now, with what face canſt thou ſay, the tidings of peace which they brought are lovely, but they that brought them are loathſome? with what face canſt thou ſay it? I am always afraid that that which is brought, is never welcome, when they that bring it are not welcome.

(*My beloved*) time was (*to my knowledge*) time hath been, when a godly Miniſter that God hath made uſe of to convert a ſoul, Ohow dear was he? and how near was he lodged to the hearts of ſuch Perſons! but ah, but now, not a good look, nor a good word for them that did them no wrong but this, to bring them in to Chriſt; *pardon them this wrong.* What ſaith *Paul, Am I become your enemy, becauſe*

I tell you the truth? O forgive me this wrong. I ſeek to ſave you, & you ſeek to undo me; pardon me that wrong.

(*My beloved*) I durſt ask many a ſoul, whether if ever they knew Jeſus Chriſt indeed and in truth, God did not uſe ſome or other Miniſter of the Goſpel to bring them in? I ſay generally; if ſo, why then ſhould not that be as deſirable to bring thee up that was deſirable when it brought thee in? Is it an injury to help thee heavenward? doth it do thee any wrong to ſave thy ſoul? if ſo, be their enemie, though they tel thee the truth; but if it do good to thee, and to ſave thy ſoul be a courteſie, make much of them. If God ſhould take away the Candleſtick, or the Candle out of the ſtick, thou would'ſt wiſh for it again; but if any be otherwiſe minded, let me tell them, they are fallen; and let me beſeech them to *remember from whence they are fallen, and to repent, and do their firſt works*. But in the ſixth place,

VI.

VI. Beleevers *at firſt*, upon their firſt advance heaven-ward, while they put their foot forward to eternal life; O how watchful were they over their hearts, and over their wayes, killing ſinne in the very firſt motions of it!

I dare ſay, that a thought of being proud, a thought of being covetous, a thought of ſinning hath pierced their ſouls as a ſword; and O how have they gone mourning all that day long, wherein they have found an earthly minde, and an inclination to decline from God! *ſo tender were their ſoules*, that if Satan did but offer a temptation, their very hearts riſe, I, and in their might they riſe up againſt it, and were ſo truly conſcienceious, that they abſtained from it, I, and abhorred the very appearances of evil; If a thing did but look like ſinne, though it were not a ſinne; yet if it did but look like a ſinne, O how were they afraid to look at it! how would they ſtand at a diſtance from

pitch,

pitch,& touch it not, leſt they ſhould be defiled! how ſhie were they of looking upon the wine, when it was red in the glaſſe! & if a garment were but ſported with the fleſh, O at what a diſtance would they ſtand!

Now(*My beloved*)if it be not ſo, you are fallen; if you have loſt this tenderneſſe, and loſt this conſcienciouſneſſe; and can now make bold, not only with the appearances of evil, bnt with appearing evil,& apparent evils, *are you not fallen?* Time was when you were afraid to look like a proud perſon, what now to be a proud perſon, is it not to fal think ye? Time was when they were afraid, leſt their carriage ſhould give any body to think they were wanton; I, but now to carry it like wantons, is it not to fall? My beloved, I beſeech you, remember your firſt works, that good tenderneſſe and bleeding of ſoul at but a touch of ſin. *Againe,*

VII. They were not only watchfull

full over themselves, fearfull to offend, and *blessed is that man that so feareth alwayes*; but they were also watchfull over their brethren, over one another, they were their brothers keepers; I, and would not in any wayes suffer sin upon their brother: and *I must professe*, I do not know wherein professors are more fallen then in this. It is true indeed, they watch; but is it not for one anothers haltings? It is true indeed, they will reprove but is it not with reproaches? Saints had wont to go like *Shem* and *Japhet*, backward to cover the nakednes of their brothers; and now like *wicked Cain*, who can fastest discover their brothers nakednesse? and O what a fine thing it is, if they can but find another as bad as themselves, as if another mans sin would justifie them, and free them from condemnation!

Moreover, if these souls in the dayes of old, could not gaine their brother by exhortation, or counsel, or re-

reproof; why, they would go home, and mourne exceedingly, as *Jeremiah* ſaith; *If* I cannot prevaile, *I will go and mourn in ſecret*; and, O, how did their eyes run down with teares, becauſe others did not keep Gods Laws! but alas! now, that that *Paul* would have told the world of weeping, men tell the world of laughing; and that is that there are men, *whoſe god is their belly, who are enemies to the Croſſe of Chriſt*; O remember from whence ye are fallen, and do your firſt works: Leave reproaches, but uſe repoofs; and inſtead of watching for haltings, be ſure to watch to keep from halting. (*But to make haſt*) in the 8th. place,

VIII. There was this remarkable (and I beſeech you obſerve it) in all primitive Profeſſors, and all young beginners, (as I may call them) they took a ſpecial care of all their Families, and Relations comitted to their care; O how did they travel in birth for their children, till they were new-

born!

borne I, and travel again till Chriſt were formed in them; O! how would they beſeech the Lord, that their ſervants might ſerve God? what care there was to make every one in the Family a Saint, a holy wife, a holy child, & a holy ſervant, to have a Church in a houſe?

You know, GOD called *Abraham* his frind, why? *I know, he will teach his children after him*, & ſaith *Joſhua, As for my part, do you what you think good, but I & my houſe we will ſerve the Lord.* O, what care there was among the old Profeſſors, the old Puritans (you cal'd them) to bring up their children in the fear of God, and to look to it, that a vile perſon ſhould not be let into, much leſſe abide in their houſe, if they could help it? But now (*My beloved*) is it not the ſad complaint that is (and is to be) made, no children more neglected then Profeſſors children, no ſervants more neglected then Profeſſors ſervants? O that this ſhould be ſpoken in theſe days where there is more light in words, but (it ſeems) more

darkneſſe in deeds; *O remember from whence you are fallen!*

To your old Family-work again, O ſet up Family-duties again! if ever you mean to have good Families, up with Family-duties again; if ever you mean to have good Relations, pray more with them, & pray more for them; if ever you mean to have good children, O give them up to God, and teach them the fear of the Lord, train them up in his paths betimes. Little would one have thought that ever it ſhould have been a queſtion among Chriſtians, whether one ſhould teach children the fear of the Lord; whether one ſhould teach a child the trade of his way, when he is young, that when he is old he may not depart from it?

I remember that it was the ſaying of a Heathen, being asked, what things we were to teach children to know? We muſt (ſaid he) teach them to know that when they are young, that they muſt do when they are old: that was his anſwer. *We were beſt call him a Chriſtian, and call Chri-*

Chriſtians Heathens, for by their practice both may be ſaid. Is it not a ſhame that it ſhould be ſaid, no children ſo rude, ſo vile, ſo abuſing the Name of God, as them that will be (forſooth) the moſt eminent Profeſſours, and of them that have attained (in pretention) to more ſteps then ordinary heaven-ward? *But in the nineth place,*

IX. Saints *at their firſt coming in* to God in the beginning of their days they were viſible Saints, he that did run might read an alteration. Alas! the Saints are grown inviſible, and are they not fallen? *Tertullian* tells us that Chriſtians were known by the amendment of their lives; no man ſo meek as the Chriſtian, no man ſo humble as the Chriſtian, no man ſo holy as the Chiſtian, ſo juſt, ſo upright, ſo faithfull as the Chriſtian; they were known all the world over by being the beſt men, they were viſible Saints; a man might have read the image of JESUS CHRIST in them, and the verteus of their Maſter

were limned over; *The lived the word of life in the works of their lives.*

But now Saints (I ſay) are grown inviſible, and are they not fallen? Truly there are ſcarce any outward words or works almoſt to be found, by which one can diſcerne a Saint from a ſinner in our age; It was otherwiſe once, but we are fallen. They will tell you, O what ſweet enjoyments they have within! it may well be within, for none can ſee it without; Chriſt tells us, *By their fruits* (ſaith he) *you ſhall know them*; And, *Hereby ſhall all men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye keep my Commandments.* O we can talk of raviſhments within, and O what a place of Scripture was ſet home upon my heart at ſuch a time! and O how God raviſhed me upon ſuch a day! O but can ointment be hid? can a man conceale coales in his boſome? where is this humility and holineſſe that ſhould ariſe from this communion with God? where is the righteouſnes, the juſtice, the upright dealing amongſt men that was wont

wont to be viſible amongſt the Saints? *O that in a viſible world be Saints ſhould be inviſible!*

It is ſtoried of a Philoſopher (if I miſtake not) the Cynick, *Diogenes*, that he went with a Lanthorn and candle at high noon into the Market-place; the people asked him what he meant to do? I am going to find out a man (ſaith he:) A man (ſay they?) here is a multitude of men, here are ſtore of men in the Market; O (ſaith he) I would find out *a man*, one that acts like a man, and lives like a man.

Truly, one might go (*would God there were no cauſe to ſay it,*) through Congregations, & through ſuch meeting places as theſe are, with a lanthorn and candle amongſt the Saints to finde out a Saint, amongſt Profeſſors to finde out a Profeſſor.

You will ſay, here are ſtore: I, here are Profeſſors, but where is that that is profeſſed? A man may find many that profeſſe humility, but where is that humility that is profeſſed? one may find many that profeſſe holineſs, but where ſhall one finde the holineſſe that is profeſſed? one may finde many that profeſſe heavenly-mindedneſſe, but where ſhall one find the heavenly-mindedneſs that is profeſſed? As he ſaid, Give me that tells me the man is a man: ſo, give me that too that tells me a Saint is a Saint; give me that that

makes a Saint visible, *a visible Saint* for my Religion. *In the last place,*

X. Saints *at the first coming in to Jesus Christ*, were very choice of their company, and of their communion; they were not every bodies fellow, at least every body was not theirs. Saith *Paul*, I am crucified to this world, I and the world is crucified to me; I am even with it, (*saith he*) I pay it in its own coine; *the meaning of it is this*, the world thinks not the Saints worthy of their company, and the Saints think not the world worthy of theirs. At first they were very choice of their society, 'twas a vexation to their soul to live in *Sodome*, an hell to them to be with *Mesek*, and to have their habitation in the tents of *Kedar*; they would not be amongst the crowde, nor go with a multitude to do evil.

They were in very truth *Separatists*, that is, men that did withdraw from sin and sinners; I mean no faction, nor this, nor that; but (I say) they were truly *Separatists*, men that separated from sinne and sinners. You have somewhat in one of *Pauls* Epistles as an answer to that question, 1 *Cor.* 5. 9. It seems the (*poor souls*) were very shie of their company, what company they kept; and therefore saith he, *I write to you not to keep company with Fornicators, yet not with the*

For

Fornicators of this world, for then ye muſt go out of the world; the world is ſo full of them, that you will ſcarce buy or ſell, but you will meet with a drunkard, ſwearer, fornicator, or one ſinner or other; *But* (ſaith he) *if there be any man that is called a brother*, any man that profeſſeth the Name of God, and the fear of God, and this man be a fornicator, or this man be covetous, or this man be ſo and ſo; *I would not have you eat with that man*, no, I would not have you ſo much as ſit at his table, *much leſſe at Gods Table* with that man.

And the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, 2*Cor.*6.14. *Why will ye be unequally yoaked? What communion hath light with darneſs? What fellowſhip hath Chriſt with Belial? or righteouſneſſe with unrighteouſneſs?* To ſee a Saint & a ſinner keep company, were to ſee the living & the dead keep houſe together, and you know what ſweet work there is like to be; Why now, if thou be no more ſhie of thy company, but likeſt all, as if all were alike, thou art fallen: It may be thou canſt pleaſe thy ſelf as well in a fornicators company, or in a drunkards company, or in an earth-worms company, or in a jeſters company, as thou canſt in the company of a Saint, or in the company of a dear child of God: I tell thee, if ſo, thou art fallen; *O remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy firſt works.* Be

Be choice, (ſaith he) have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſſe, nor with the workers of darkneſſe, but reprove them rather; how? by with-drawing from them, by having no more fellowſhip with them; *For Saints to be intimate with ſinners, is to intimate that they are ſinners*; and therefore I beſeech you, that you will pleaſe to remember from whence you are fallen, and let us ſo remember as to repent; Let it grieve our hearts that we have grieved our God, and let us love him the more, for that we have loved him ſo little; let us now make ſtrait ſteps to our feet, and be double diligent; and as it is ſaid of another of the Churches, let our works be more, I, and better at laſt then at firſt. O that as we grow in days, we may grow in grace, and abound in the work of the Lord!

Thus (my beloved) let us remember and repent, and do our firſt works; *and then*, when Jeſus Chriſt comes we ſhall not need to fear the removing of Candleſticks, but the lighting up of joy and peace to our ſouls; I, and he will ſay unto us, *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.*

So much (*and no more*) for this time.

FINIS.